

# Finding of No Significant Impact

**EA Number:** #OR-056-02-006

**Title of Action:** Huntington Ranch LLC Road and Utility Rights-of-Way

**Serial Number:** OR 55746 & 57273

**BLM Office:** Prineville District, Deschutes Resource Area

## **Proposed Action:**

The proposed action is the granting of seven rights-of-way (ROWs) within three ROW corridors across Bureau of Land Management (BLM) managed lands to Huntington Ranch LLC to allow for access and utility service to a private land parcel located in T.16S., R.13 E., Section 16, Willamette Meridian, Oregon. These ROWs will allow for paved access, power, cable, telephone, water, sewer, and natural gas service to the property. Granting of the ROWs across BLM managed land to Huntington Ranch LLC will allow for the development of a destination resort on the property.

## **Decision:**

It is my decision to grant the Huntington Ranch LLC a permanent and temporary road access rights-of-way (ROW) as described in Alternative B of EA Number OR-056-02-006, dated January 8, 2002. Alternative B also allows for power, cable TV and telephone utilities to be placed in the existing roadbed for ROW grant, OR-49075, and water, sewer and gas line utilities to run parallel to the existing PGE pipeline. It is also my decision to authorize these utilities as outlined in Alternative B in future requests from the respective utility companies.

## **Finding of No Significant Impact:**

Based on the following summary of effects (as discussed in the EA) I have determined that Alternative B, which I have selected, will not have a significant effect on the human environment. For this reason, no environmental impact statement needs to be prepared.

My reasons for this determination are:

- There is no prime or unique farmland affected by the development of these ROW corridors.
- Soils would have the least amount of disturbance under Alternative B. There would be a total of 52.8 acres of new disturbance out of approximately 34,500 acres of the surrounding BLM managed land.
- There were no special status plants found, therefore, there would be no impacts to special status plants.

- Impacts to Vegetation under Alternative B, would be a total of 52.8 acres of vegetation disturbed out of approximately 34,500 acres of the surrounding BLM managed land. These impacts would be mitigated through revegetation of the disturbed areas, avoidance of trees, and by fencing to reduce increased user created roads.
- Construction disturbance on the ROW corridors would have a high probability for invasion and establishment of noxious weed species. To mitigate this impact, Huntington Ranch LLC, is required to suppress noxious weeds according to the BLM standards for noxious weed suppression for a period of three years following construction. All construction equipment will be washed before and after use.
- There are no natural streams, lakes or natural water bodies of any kind within several miles of the right-of-way corridors, therefore, no impact to water resources would occur. The ground water removed by Avion Water Company is under the jurisdiction of Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD); BLM is currently commenting on the types of mitigation measures the OWRD may establish.
- The area is identified in the Brothers/La Pine RMP as not having high or sensitive visual qualities. The following currently exist in the area; two sets of double power lines, two natural gas pipelines, and a canal.
- Visual Resources would be impacted by the ROW corridors. However, Access and Utility Construction Standards would mitigate many of the visual impacts of the development and use of the ROW corridors.
- Wildfire and Public Safety would be impacted through the development of the ROW corridors. The presence of fire department staff stationed in the immediate area would reduce response times to fire, life, and safety situations and mitigate the increased possibility of wildfire and public safety hazards. Because of this, Wildfire and Public Safety would not be significantly impacted.
- The area is within the 12,254 acre Crenshaw Allotment which completely surrounds the proposed resort. Huntington Ranch LLC, developer of the Huntington Ranch currently holds the grazing permit for the Crenshaw Allotment. Three new pastures would be created allowing the most flexibility for varying grazing strategies and opportunities to rest pastures. Because of the new pastures and the fencing Livestock Grazing would not be significantly impacted.
- Wildlife, particularly pronghorn antelope, would be affected by the ROW corridors. However, the acres of lost Pronghorn Antelope habitat would be 290 acres out of 45,000 acres of BLM managed land available in the area of potential habitat. A mitigation measure to fence the road access ROW would be constructed to specifications that should maintain the habitat at 90 percent of optimum and minimize short and long term impacts. Because of this, pronghorn antelope would not be significantly impacted.
- There would be approximately 4.25 miles lost to OHV and horseback riding trail opportunities within the 34,500 acres of the surrounding BLM managed lands. However, the new paved access route would provide 4 miles of paved recreational opportunities (bike riding and roller blading) in the area. There would be no significant impact to recreation.

- The military permit would not be significantly affected by the development of the ROW corridors. The BLM received a letter, dated December 13, 2000, from Colonel William R. Spores of the Oregon Military Department, stating that the use of the 6585 C Road would minimize the civilian/military interface.
- There are no impacts to Environmental Justice because no low income or minority populations have been identified by the BLM internally or through the public comment process.
- There would be no impact on Threatened, Endangered or Sensitive animals within the affected area because none exist in the area.
- The proposed project would have “No Effect” on any listed or eligible cultural resources. The majority (69%) of cultural resources identified are considered not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The National Register status of the remaining sites (31%) is undetermined at this time but at least 90% of those sites can be avoided through project design. In the event that cultural resource sites cannot be avoided any impacts to them would be minimized.
- The area is not within a Wild and Scenic River boundary, Wilderness Study Area, or Area of Critical Environmental Concern; therefore no impacts to those resources would occur.
- Traffic, Noise and Pollution the BLM defers to the county and state on these issues, unless the county and state standards do not meet federal standards.
- The holder would comply with all applicable Federal laws and regulations existing or hereafter enacted or promulgated regarding Hazardous Materials.

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Robert Towne, Deschutes Field Manager

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Date

Attachment:  
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